# Fields Of Fire Quick Start Guide

## V 1.2

## Introduction

This Fields Of Fire Quick Start Guide is for owners of Fields Of Fire (FoF) that have just opened the box, scanned the rules, and find themselves lost as to how to start. It goes over how to set up for a mission, what the basic concepts of the game are, and how to play a turn. Rather than read the rules from start to finish, readers should read this Quick Start Guide in *conjunction* with the rules, following along as directed. Once a player has finished with this Quick Start Guide, reading the rules should make a lot more sense.

This Quick Start Guide is *not* meant to be a rules substitute. In fact, it only briefly touches on many rules. It is designed to be a quick overview of FoF to facilitate your initial understanding of the game such that reading the rules afterwards makes a lot more sense. Hopefully, you can be on your way playing the first missions as soon as possible!

I also recommend you download and follow along with the provided "Examples of Play" from the GMT Games web site. These are very helpful.

## What To Do First

Go ahead. Open the box! I recommend you become familiar with the counters, and your armies. First, separate the 3 armies into separate storage areas. There are gray counters that represent Germans armies, and then there are dark-red counters, which represent armies for the Korean and Vietnam missions. US armies are represented by green counters. For the opening missions, you do not need the Korean or Vietnamese armies, so put them away for later.

Next separate the blue counters into another pile. The blue counters represent Cover, Ammo, Tactical Control Markers, Visibility, Activation, Potential Contacts (PC Markers), and more. I recommend you divide the blue counters into 2 piles, one for Potential Contacts, and one for everything else (PC Markers need to be drawn frequently, and sometimes randomly from the available counters, and therefore should be separate from the rest of the blue counters).

Next, separate the brown counters. These represent cover fortifications, such as bunkers, foxholes, trenches, and pillboxes.

Lastly, separate the red combat counters. These are PDFs, VOFs, Pinned, Exposed, Incoming, etc… You'll need these counters a lot!

If you have extra storage containers and time, you can divide up any of the above-mentioned piles into even further piles as needed. The initial separations I described should be adequate for most game situations, however. But we want to play, and don't need to keep separating counters at this time. Find what works best for you!

## Terrain

Let's start by looking at Mission 1. Lay out the terrain cards in a *4 column by 3 row* grid as indicated by the Briefing Booklet, Page 3. Missions Details specify columns and rows, and whether terrain cards are face up or face down. If a card says "Hill", it means you must draw *another* terrain card to lie on top of it, thereby raising the Elevation Level (discussed below).

Mission 1 also requires that you put down Tactical Control Markers, which is a fancy way of describing the "objectives" and "the edges of the map". You need Left Boundary, Right Boundary, Line of Departure, and Line of Advance markers. These represent the box you play in, and are needed because enemies can spawn in off-map locations, extending the map in all directions. These extended locations cannot be moved into under normal conditions, but the enemies must be dealt with nonetheless. You may also see Phase Line markers, which can be used to control specific advances of your forces when the time comes (for example, when you see the red flare, advance to Phase Line 1). Other Tactical Control Markers are Landing Zones (for Helicopters), Casualty Collection Points, Evacuation Zones, etc… For now, just use the initial 4 tactical control boundary markers, and place them at each side of your 4x3 grid.

Mission 1 also tells you to place PC Markers on all the cards, C's on Row 1, A's on Row 2, and B's on Row 3.

Depending on the mission, you will also have to designate objectives. In Mission 1, you have to designate a Primary and a Secondary Objective on Row 3, and you must place an Attack Point as well on Row 2. In most cases, these have no significance other than being locations you need to capture to succeed in the mission, and don't offer you any other benefits. But you do have latitude as to where to place them, so you'll want to place them where you think your troops have the best chance of succeeding in the mission.


## LOS

LOS stands for Line Of Sight. LOS represents what your units can see. Units have LOS to all cards adjacent to them, including diagonally. Therefore, a card has LOS to the 8 adjacent cards.

Additionally, units have LOS to any card beyond the adjacent cards if the card they are seeing *through* has white borders on both sides in the direction of the LOS. The target card, however, does not need any white borders at all to see *into*. Once the intervening card is passed (because it has two white borders), the next card is visible in LOS no matter what color borders it has.

The different color borders play a role in the Cover and Concealment value, however. You'll notice that some Terrain cards have two Cover and Concealment values. The bigger number (the better one) is used when enemy fire crosses into that card over a black border. The lower number (the weaker one) is used when the enemy fire crosses into the card via a white border. Therefore, the black border may not stop LOS into the card (because the card is adjacent to the enemy or because the intervening card between the target card and the enemy's card has two white borders), but it will allow the friendly force in the card to use the higher cover number when fired at from the black border's direction.

Smoke, Incoming fire, and other modifiers can also block LOS. Please see the rules for explanations of these points.

For example:

- Unit's Card → Black Bordered Woods (Unit has LOS into the Woods because the Woods are adjacent no matter what color the Wood's borders are)
- Unit's Card → Black Bordered Woods → Open Fields (Unit does NOT have LOS into the Open Fields because it can't see through the Black Bordered Woods)
- Unit's Card → Open Fields → Black Bordered Woods (Unit has LOS into the Black Bordered Woods because the intervening card has white borders on both sides in the LOS from the Unit's Card)
- Unit's Card → Open Fields → White Bordered Woods (Unit HAS LOS into the Woods because it can see through Open Fields)
- Unit's Card → Open Fields → Black/White Bordered Gulley (Unit HAS LOS into the Gulley because the intervening Open Fields have white borders on both sides; but any attacks across the black side of the gulley will allow the defender to use the higher cover and concealment value found on the card, whereas attacks across the white border cause the lower cover value to be used)

## *Elevation*

All terrain is at level 1 elevation by default. A Hill raises a card's elevation level by 1 for each Hill card. Additionally, multi-level structures can add an additional elevation level on top of the card they are on. Units have LOS *over* any intervening terrain card that is at a lower level (even if that card has a multi-level structure on it that allows units to see from a higher elevation level). So a unit at level 2 can see over a level 1 card to another level 1 card. However, that a unit cannot see from level 2 to a level 1 card if there is an intervening level 2 card.

*All LOS is reciprocal. If you can see the enemy, they can see you!* The only exception is with Smoke… please see rules for more information. See Rulebook Pages 2, 3, 19, and 20 for more detailed LOS and Elevation examples.

## Preparing Your Armies

Next, prepare your armies. Open the Briefing Booklet to page 1. This lists the forces that are available for the *entire* Normandy Campaign. There is a single counter in your army for *each* item listed on this page. For Mission 1, you must make a choice of whether to have a 3-Step Mortar Squad or 3 1-Step Mortar teams. In cases where units are of the same type, there are designations on each that give each a unique squad or team identification (e.g. 1/Wp, 2/Wp, 1/1 Plt, 3/2 Plt, 1/LMG, 3/LMG). There will not be duplicates of these tokens, although there are duplicates of all of the lesser versions of tokens such as generic Fire Teams and Assault Teams.

You may also receive additional armies on a per mission basis. In this case, turn to Page 4 of the Briefing Booklet, and look at the *Attachments* section. This gives you an additional unit you can assign to Staff or HQ's for this mission. Other missions give you other units to use as well.

Additionally, pull out counters for all of the Equipment and Ammunition listed on Page 2 of the Briefing Booklet. The only exception is that LMG, HMG, Rocket, Mortar, and Tank ammo is tracked on the *log* sheet, rather than using counters, and therefore there are not any counters for them (any ammo counters in the box are used for ammo that is transported around the map; there is not enough to track actual ammo on a per-unit basis). For my first mission, however, I placed unused red-army counters underneath my units to represent ammo instead so I could reduce record keeping and focus on the on-map action. When tracking on the log, the unique names assigned to each team should help you keep ammunition straight.

Now that you've pulled out your armies and equipment, I recommend you keep these separate from the rest of the US Army counters during storage. Why? Because you'll use these counters every time you play Mission 1, which you will probably play a couple of times.

## Unit VOF, Ammo, and Range

What kind of ammo do you have? Well, it depends on what kind of unit you have. Look at the counters you've pulled out.

Counters will have a Volume Of Fire (VOF) rating on them in the lower left corner (see Rules, Pg. 4), which basically means they can shoot things. Ratings are S for Small Arms Fire, A for Automatic Weapons, G! for Grenade, Rocket and Mortar Attacks, H for heavy weapons such as HMGs, A/G for teams that can fire both grenades and machine guns, and S! for Snipers. If the VOF rating has a yellow arrow over it, it means it is Tripod mounted and special rules apply (tripods and certain mounted weapons can fire through and over cards, and can't fire the same turn they've moved). If there is no VOF rating, the unit can't attack at all (it is a non-combat unit, such as a runner or spotter).

The VOF rating will translate to a better chance to hit the enemy when we get to combat effects later on. For now, just note that the VOF ratings correspond to ammo types and combat modifiers during the combat phase. If a unit does not have a VOF rating on it, it *cannot* engage in combat without turning into a Fire Team first (which basically means it has abandoned its responsibilities, has picked up some weapons, and has become a small fighting force).

Small Arms Fire ammo is not tracked during the game. However, A, G!, and H ammo *is*. Small arms ammo supply is modeled by the fact that you fail a mission if you can't complete it within a certain number of turns (representing a loss of small arms ammo, among other things). The amount of ammo each of the other units starts with is listed in the Briefing Booklet either in the Equipment and Ammunition listing (Page 2) or in the enemy ammo section (Page 5, *Ammo*). Also, some units have 1-shot ammo which is represented by counters, such as Rifle Grenades. These counters are disposed of after first use. Therefore, in Mission 1, friendly LMG's start with 4 units of ammo.

Note also that units have a Range value, which is P for Point Blank (same card), C for Close (adjacent), L for Long (2 cards), and V for Very Long (3 cards). See Rules, Pg. 4. For example, a unit may have S-L on its counter, which means it is a Small Arms Fire unit that fires up to Long Range as long as it has LOS to the target. The actual LOS may be lower than the maximum range for a unit in bad weather or limited visibility conditions. In Mission 1, however, the visibility level is broad daylight, which allows for visibility up to 3 cards. Other factors, such as blocking terrain and smoke, however, can restrict LOS range even further.

Now it's time to set up the forces. But first, we need to understand chain of command.

## Command Structure

In Mission 1, there are 4 HQ's to be aware of. There is the Company HQ (CO HQ), then 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Platoon HQ's. There are also 2 Staff Members, CO XO and CO 1ST SGT, that work for the CO HQ, and function similarly to the other HQ's because they will have their own units assigned to them and can be activated when needed.

When we assign our initial forces and equipment, we are assigning them to one of the 6 HQ's or Staff available for Mission 1. Your default assignments for Mission 1 are as follows:

1. CO HQ
2. CO XO
3. CO 1ST SGT
4. 1ST PLT HQ
   - 1/1ST SQUAD
   - 2/1ST SQUAD
   - 3/1ST SQUAD
5. 2ND PLT HQ
   - 1/2ND SQUAD
   - 2/2ND SQUAD
   - 3/2ND SQUAD
6. 3RD PLT HQ
   - 1/3RD SQUAD
   - 2/3RD SQUAD
   - 3/3RD SQUAD

These initial forces need to be placed in the Staging Area to start the game. Staging areas are off-map areas that your units start on. Units can move freely between these areas for 1 standard Movement Action. All Units in the Staging Area have LOS to each other (weather permitting). They have Radio Contact and Telephone Contact in the Staging Area as well. Units cannot fire from the Staging Area to the map, nor be fired upon.

At this point, you need to assign the other units (including the Arty FO Spotter we were assigned on Briefing Booklet, Pg. 4), the Jeep, and all of the Equipment, Assets, and Pyrotechnics. Place each of the Units you assign (in this case, the 60mm Mortar Section (s), Bazooka Sections, LMG Sections, 1/.50 Cal HMG Team, the Jeep, and the Runners) with any HQ or Staff SGT you desire, and place *all* of the Units in the Staging Areas for your first mission.

Unlike the living units, the Assets, Equipment, and Pyrotechnics are generally placed on the Command Display to save space (although this is not required). Keep in mind, however, that items in the command display are attached *only* to the Unit on the map that is listed in the box the items are placed. So a Pyrotechnic in the 1st PLT HQ Command Display slot can only be used by the 1ST PLT HQ during the game, and not by any other

member of the 1ˢᵗ PLT. It acts just as if the Pyrotechnic was stored with the 1ˢᵀ PLT HQ counter, under it. The Command Display essentially is saving you space on the actual terrain map.

In the Final Example Of Play on GMT's web site, you'll notice that the Arty Spotter you are assigned has a Field Phone underneath his counter, whereas the other units have their phones stored on the Command Display. This phone goes under him only because there isn't a Command Display place for him that can hold his assets (feel free to create one). As I said, you could technically place all the phones and pyrotechnics under each counter in the staging area, but that would be a pretty big stack under the HQs!

*There is generally no restriction on which units gets which Attachments or Pyrotechnics.* As a general rule, you want to assign some Attachments and Pyrotechnics to the Staff (XO and 1ˢᵀ SGT) so that they can be commanded by leaders other than the PLT HQ'S (which generally are moving into battle). You can even assign items to the platoon squads themselves (e.g. not the platoon HQ's), but this makes them hard to use later on. The choice of where to assign these items comes down to flexibility, redundancy, and communication conditions. You have limited radios and/or phones, and you have terrain that brings units out of communication. So if you expect your PLT HQ to run off into the woods, you are probably better off leaving some assets and teams to the Staff XO or 1ˢᵀ SGT so that they can use them should the need arise.

Give all the Staff and HQ's CO Tac Net phones (or radios), so they can all be activated by the CO HQ. If they do not have a phone, and move out of visual or radio/phone contact, you will *not* be able to activate them from the CO HQ, and will have to rely on the Initiative Phase to give them commands (you'll receive less in this phase than if they were activated as normal). It is to be expected that some units will move out of range from the HQ controlling them during the battle (this is what happens in war), and that they will have to rely on Initiative commands to take actions, but phones and radios can reduce the number of times this has to happen.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that although you assign squads and items to units for control, you may place these units anywhere in the Staging Area you want. 3ʳᵈ PLT HQ could be on the Staging Area #4, and its squads could be on Staging Area #1. Of course, since the squads don't have radios, they couldn't communicate with their leader to receive actions, so this wouldn't be a good setup. But the point is that units can be placed wherever you want to start the game (within the Staging Area, of course), so long as you consider communication, coordination, and movement as part of your placement. It makes the most *sense* to put all 3ʳᵈ PLT Squads in the same area as their leader so they can receive initial orders, but this is not a rule or requirement. Placement of squads, units, and attachments is all up to you! Using the log sheet, you should be able to know which units are attached to which HQs and Staff Members, so your initial placement can be anything you want.

## *Pyrotechnics*

I'm adding a separate section for Pyrotechnics. Why? Because these seem to confuse a lot of people. Pyrotechnics are nothing more than items used to signal troops that can't see you, or used to mark targets for fire missions (artillery, mortars, and air strikes). For example, let's say you send your entire 1$^{st}$ Platoon into the woods. They come under heavy fire. CO HQ wants to pull them back, but they can't hear it because you didn't send 1$^{st}$ PLT HQ into the woods with them. Had 1$^{st}$ PLT HQ been in the woods, CO HQ could have phoned in the order to retreat because 1$^{st}$ PLT HQ is probably carrying a phone or radio. And 1$^{st}$ PLT HQ, who is on the same card as his squads, could have verbally or visually given them all orders to retreat. But we didn't plan ahead, and now the entire platoon is out of contact range. We could hope for enough initiative commands that allow them all to move, but we have 5 units in the woods (3 squads and 2 weapons teams we foolishly assigned to the platoon). The chances are we won't receive 5 initiative commands to use to tell all of them to retreat, and therefore some would be stuck. And even if we do receive 5 commands, we don't want to waste them all evacuating the troops that are stuck if we don't have to.

This is where Pyrotechnics come into play. We can tell the HQ or Staff that is carrying the Pyrotechnic to fire it in the air to signal all the troops. We can assign a "Retreat" order for the 1$^{st}$ Platoon to the Red Parachute or the Green Smoke. 2$^{nd}$ Platoon may have a different Pyrotechnic it is watching for, such as Yellow Smoke. Or, we can have signals that tell the *entire* 9$^{th}$ Infantry Brigade to retreat. Using 1 command, we can signal the entire platoon, saving extra commands and time (time needed to move the HQ out into the woods to establish contact with the other troops, during which time the troops could be killed). The Pyrotechnics are easy, right? But of course, the units you are signaling must be able to *see* the Pyrotechnic to receive the order, so if they are over a hill, you'll have to move that Pyrotechnic somewhere they can see! Time to send the CO XO into the woods too! He must reach the top of the hill to send the signal, or your platoon will be MIA! Of course, if your troop is over the hill, and out of contact, they'll probably realize this and just pack up and run for it rather than waiting for the XO to reach the hill. You'll only receive enough initiative commands to save a few of them, however, so you'll have to make the gut-wrenching decision of which units to leave behind… at least YOU can stop playing and go out for dinner, unlike your squads… Good luck!.

For your first Mission, you might not want to bother mapping Pyrotechnics at all. First of all, you have no idea what orders you want to assign, and you don't know how the game plays. If you want to give yourself some training latitude, I recommend just assigning the pyrotechnic assets to different units, and then figuring out what orders you want to use them for once you are in the game and actually need them. This will get you in the game faster. When your units are in trouble, you can decide what the green smoke means at that point, and deploy it. Once you get comfortable with the system, you can better assign orders to Pyrotechnics in future missions.

# The Game Turn

## Friendly Higher HQ Event Phase

This phase is where special events may occur that benefit your troops. You draw an Action Card, and if a HQ icon is on it, an HQ Event occurs. You draw another Action Card, look at the Random # for 10, and then look at the event in the Briefing Book corresponding to your number to see what happens (Briefing Book Page 4).

*This phase does not happen on Turn 1.*

## Friendly Command Phase Summary

### What Is Activation?

When a unit is activated, it draws for commands, meaning it draws from the top card of the Action Deck, looks at the top left corner for the command number, and receives that many commands to use to order troops (see Rulebook, Page 3). You'll have to modify the command number based on modifiers found in the Charts & Tables (inside, top left of the charts). When a unit receives commands, it can activate a subordinate HQ or Staff (if it is the CO HQ), or it can issue commands directly to itself or to units it controls. For Mission 1, the only unit that can activate subordinate HQ's or Staff is the CO HQ.

For example:

In Mission 1, since the BN HQ is not on the map, we start by activating CO HQ. CO HQ draws a card, and receives the larger of the two command numbers on the top left corner of the card (See Rulebook, Page 3). Let's say the number is 4. We check the modifier chart in the Charts & Tables to see if we get an extra command (or lose a command). At the beginning of the game, because the contact level is "No Contact", we receive +1 commands, but since the CO HQ is Green to start the game (Briefing Booklet, Page 2), we also suffer a -1. So CO HQ has 4 commands it can use. It can use these to give itself 4 orders, or give direct orders to any unit on the map it is in contact with, or to Activate any subordinate HQ or Staff it is in contact with. To be in contact with a unit, a unit must be in visual or verbal communication (same card), or in contact via phone or radio. Therefore, CO HQ could order itself to move to an adjacent card, then to find cover, or to deploy a flare. It can also order other units within contact to do the same. However, because a CO HQ is supposed to *lead*, it is best used not giving orders directly to subordinates, but instead *Activating* HQ's and Staff.

The CO HQ can use one command to A*ctivate* a subordinate HQ, such as the 1$^{st}$ Platoon HQ. When it does this, the 1$^{st}$ Platoon HQ will be able to draw a new command card to receive its own command allocation. In this case, if the Green-Level 1$^{st}$ Platoon HQ draws a 6 (+1 for "No Contact" rating, -1 for Green Level), it will receive 6 commands it can then use to order its troops. This is *far more efficient* than having the CO HQ spend 4 of its own commands to order the same troops. Therefore, for 1 command, the CO HQ gives the 1$^{st}$ Platoon HQ 6 commands, and yet has 3 commands leftover for itself from the initial 4 it started with. As you can see, the CO HQ should activate HQ's whenever possible, allowing those HQ's to draw for their own commands, and only order itself or units directly when needed. Note that the CO HQ can activate the Platoon HQ's OR the CO XO or CO 1$^{ST}$ SGT.

Once the subordinate HQ or Staff receives activation orders, they draw for their command allotment, and then can order all troops and resources assigned to them. For a platoon, this usually means spending commands sending squads into battle, or ordering them to shift fire or cease fire (if they are in contact). For CO XO and CO 1$^{ST}$ SGT, this usually means ordering weapons teams and spotters that have been assigned to it, or firing off Pyrotechnic devices to issue orders to teams that are out of communication range.

HQ's and Staff can save commands if they won't want to spend them. This is tracked on the Command Display. Why save commands? Well, let's just say that if you want to send your entire platoon into the un-scouted woods on turn 1, be my guest. Let me know how that turns out when you find a minefield. You could spend 1 command to order one unit to scout, and save the rest of the commands for a future turn… but I'm just a PDF document, and you are a real commander… Of course, pay attention to the saved command limits on the Command Display, and also found in the Charts and Tables player aids, as you cannot save an unlimited amount of commands in a turn (nor can you spend an unlimited amount in a turn; both are detailed on the Command Display and in the Charts & Tables player aid).


## Phones/Radios/Networks/Communication Range

To activate a HQ, or to order a unit, you *must* be in Communication with that unit. Units on the same card are in Communication Range because they have visual and/or verbal communication (they are all in the same hedgerow, for example, and can hear each other screaming commands). Units on different cards, however, are far apart and can't hear or see each other (terrain is abstracted, remember). To communicate with units on *different* cards, you must do so via phones or radios (even when in the staging area).

Two units on the same card are in visual and/or verbal communication as long as neither is pinned (they can't stand up and yell at each other or wave their arms while pinned), and either none are under cover *or* both are under the *same* cover. See Rulebook, Page 16. Common sense is used here. If one unit is pinned, it can't communicate with anyone else. If one unit is in a cave, the other can't see it either. But if both are in the same cave,

both units *can* see each other. If they are in *different* caves, they *can't*. And of course, if both are standing in the open field together, they *can* see each other (*get shot*, that is). Note that radios (discussed in the next paragraph) can allow units under cover to communicate with other units on the same card and not under the same cover.

The details for particular radios are different depending on the model (see the Rulebook, Page 17), but the general rule (for older radios, at least) is that radios must have LOS to each other to send signals back and forth. Some of the radios won't work over a hill, or through a forest of trees, if there is no LOS. In the staging area, all units have LOS, and so radios work very well there. But once the unit is out in the field, the unit carrying the radio must have LOS with another unit carrying a radio or with the staging area in order to receive commands on the radio or become activated. Radios allow units in cover to communicate with other units that are not under cover or not in the same cover.

Phones communicate via phone lines. They are not affected by LOS (so have an advantage in difficult terrain), but require phone lines to be laid down in order to keep them in contact. Units with phones in adjacent cards are assumed to have phone lines between them (they move with the phone). But if there are intervening cards between two phones, a phone line must be placed on the card in between to indicate that the phones are connected. Phone lines, like any other asset, must be given to a *specific unit* for deployment. If your 1$^{ST}$ PLT SQUAD goes into the field, and isn't carrying a phone line, it won't be able to lay one down, so make sure your units have phone lines when they are going to go far into the woods and need to be activated (HQ/Staff) and/or ordered. If you find you need a phone line, and don't have one, you can have units exchange phone lines by expending actions.

All phones, radios, and phone lines can be damaged and/or destroyed by enemy attacks and sabotage. See Rulebook, Page 17 for more information on cut lines and destroyed phones. Units carrying phones and radios can also be killed, in which case they will drop their phones on the terrain card they are on, and there is also the chance that whatever phones and radios they were carrying are destroyed. Since phones and radios are a limited resource, you have to deploy them carefully with units that can use them effectively and not lose them!

Lastly, players must be familiar with the concept of Radio and Telephone Networks. The network rules are in place because the primitive field phones and radios that were used by the military didn't have many alternate channel modes. A phone communicated with whatever network the cord plugged into, and the radio communicated with whatever network it was assigned to. If you want to receive orders from your CO HQ, you must have a phone or radio tuned into the CO TAC Net. If you don't, you can't receive orders or become activated by them. Similarly, Artillery Spotters, Mortar Spotters, and Air Strike Spotters have their own networks they communicate on. The networks are separate and distinct, and cannot be shared (*although different networks can share the same sets of phone lines*). Units can trade phones and radios via actions. See Rulebook, Pages 16-17 for more details. By far, the most important network you need to be concerned with in Mission 1 is the CO TAC Net, because that is what the CO HQ needs to activate your

HQ's. The Arty Spotter you were assigned in Mission 1 also has a Network Assignment to call in his Artillery Strike. He must connect to the Staging Area to be able to call in the strike.

## Activation Segment

CO HQ starts the initial activation on a turn by receiving commands via the Action Deck. This is the *CO HQ Impulse* (we skip the BN HQ Impulse for Mission 1, because it is not being used). CO HQ draws a card, looks at the larger command number, then marks the command total on the Command Display card. The CO HQ can Activate HQ's and Staff, or issue direct orders at this time (which are carried out right when ordered). I recommend when the CO HQ activates other units, that you mark the unit with an "Activated" counter so you can remember that the unit gets to draw command cards.

The CO HQ can activate:
- CO XO
- CO 1$^{ST}$ SGT
- 1$^{st}$ PLT HQ
- 2$^{nd}$ PLT HQ
- 3$^{rd}$ PLT HQ

During the *PLT HQ/CO Staff Impulse phase*, all activated units draw for new commands from the Action Deck (paying attention to modifiers). The activated units then assign orders to any units under their command, or to themselves. *Orders are carried out immediately when ordered.*

IMPORTANT: You can never order the same unit to do the same Action twice in the same *Impulse* (see the back page of the Rulebook for the Impulses that occur in the Command Phase). Therefore, you can order an Action in the PLT/HQ Staff Impulse phase, and then order the same Action in the PLT HQ Initiative Impulse, but not twice in either one. You cannot order a unit to look for cover as many times as you need to find it during one impulse phase. It can look for cover once, and that's it for that Impulse (although the Exhort Action allows a Unit to take an extra Action Card draw during the attempt, but this is not the same as taking the Action another time).

IMPORTANT: At this stage, it is important to understand two key points. First, to activate a subordinate HQ or Staff, the two entities *must* be in communication contact with each other, either by being on the same card, or by being within radio or telephone range. Secondly, there is a big difference between *Activating* a unit, and *Ordering* a unit. Only the CO HQ can *Activate* units in Mission 1, which in this case means it can activate the CO XO, CO 1$^{ST}$ SGT, and the 1$^{st}$ PLT HQ, 2$^{nd}$ PLT HQ, and 3$^{rd}$ PLT HQ. However, the higher level units can *Order* any unit under their command (which means they can have it perform any action available in the action chart as long as the unit is capable of performing that action and it is in contact with the one ordering it). In this case, the CO HQ can *order every* unit on the map, so long as it is in contact with it. The CO XO and

CO 1$^{ST}$ SGT can *order* any platoon-level unit including the PLT HQ's, but they can't *activate* them. The CO XO and CO 1$^{ST}$ SGT can also *order* units that have been assigned to them. Any of the platoon HQs can order units belonging to their HQ, but they cannot order units from other HQ's. And of course, units in a platoon can order nobody.

The *Activation Hierarchy* is as follows*:
CO HQ → CO XO, CO 1$^{ST}$ SGT, 1$^{st}$ PLT HQ, 2$^{nd}$ PLT HQ, and 3$^{rd}$ PLT HQ

The *Order Hierarchy* is as follows* **:

- CO HQ → EVERYBODY (INCLUDING ITSELF)
- CO XO, CO 1$^{ST}$ SGT → ALL PLATOON UNITS AND HQ'S AND ANY UNIT ASSIGNED TO IT (INCLUDING ITSELF), BUT NOT THE CO HQ OR OTHER CO STAFF
- 1$^{st}$ PLT HQ, 2$^{nd}$ PLT HQ, and 3$^{rd}$ PLT HQ → ANY UNITS IN THE PLATOON (INCLUDING ITSELF), BUT NOT OTHER HQS OR OTHER PLATOON SQUADS AND ATTACHMENTS

* To be Activated or Ordered, the recipient unit must be in *contact* with the unit that is Activating or Ordering it.

** Orders are carried out *immediately* when given. Move the unit when you order it to move. Have it cease fire immediately when you order it to cease fire. Do not wait until all orders have been given.


## Initiative Segment

After all units have been activated and given orders in the Activation Segment, units and staff may still be able to act in the Initiative Segment. This segment is important because you may not have had enough commands to order every unit you needed, and some units may have been ordered to move, but are now out of range and need to take some proactive actions to secure cover or avoid enemy fire. And some units may be over the hill to the north, and your phone lines have been cut, and they can't see your pyrotechnics because you haven't moved your XO out far enough to deploy them. There are 4 Impulses in the Initiative Segment.

If the CO HQ was *not activated*, it draws an Action Card and receives Initiative Commands equal to the *smaller Command Number* on the Command Card (top left of card), see Rules Pg 3. The CO HQ can issue any orders it wants *other than Activation Orders*, and issue them to other units (or HQs and Staff as per the Order Structure above), or to itself. Remember, to issue Orders, a unit must be in Contact with the recipient.

Next, if any PLT HQ was *not activated*, it can draw for Initiative Commands as well, and issue orders to any units in its command (including itself), provided the recipient is in

contact. A unit previously ordered into the woods is no longer in contact with its HQ once it moves, unless it was given a phone or radio (which is limited in supply).

Next, either of the two CO Staff (XO and 1$^{ST}$ SGT) can execute 1 command if they were *not activated* previously.

Lastly, the player gets 1 Action Card draw, receives the specified number of Initiative Commands, and can spend them on any unit it wants. This draw is often used to tell squads or teams that are out of range to search for cover, cease fire, spot a sniper or artillery spotter, or to try to rally back into a fire team. This number is halved for Combat Patrol Missions (rounded down).

One important rule to remember is that commands received during the Initiative Segment can be combined with commands saved from prior turns or segments.


## Engaging The Enemy


While executing commands at this point, your squads and teams may move such that an enemy comes into their LOS. When this happens, your units automatically engage that enemy when the order is executed, provided that the unit can *see* the enemy (e.g. unspotted enemies cannot be targeted, even if they are firing at friendly units). If your forces see an enemy, they will immediately place a PDF marker pointing to that enemy to signal they are firing into the enemy's card, and then place VOF markers on the enemy's card to represent the amount of fire coming into the card. If movement or enemy actions cause more than one enemy to appear within LOS at the *same time*, your units will engage according to the priorities listed on Page 21 (Closest, Highest VOF, Randomly). Otherwise, engagement happens in the *order* units appear.

To summarize again, when an enemy comes into play, and your forces open fire, you place a PDF token on the edge of your card pointing to the card your forces are firing at. Then you place a VOF token on that card (the target card) indicating the type of fire that card is facing.

**_IMPORTANT:_** Units will engage the enemy *whenever* they come into view, and in *whatever phase* they come into view. Units may engage during the Command Phase, the Enemy HQ Event Segment, Enemy Activity Check Segment, the Potential Contact phase, etc. Additionally, during any phase, units may move *out of LOS* due to enemy movement or events, causing a change and shifting of firing priorities, whereupon your units may select new targets, cause new PDF's to be placed (or PDF's to be removed if no target), new VOF's to be placed, etc… *Manage engagements and PDF's in real-time as they change.*

*Additionally, as engagements and contacts change, you must update the Mission Activity Level at the same time.* The Mission Activity Level determines how many cards to draw

for Contacts in the Potential Contact resolution steps. The Activity Levels are "No Contact", "Contact", "Engaged", and "Heavily Engaged".

You will place an Automatic Weapons VOF on a card if you have units firing at the card with an "A" VOF rating. Other possible VOF's are Small Arms VOF, Heavy Weapons VOF, Grenades, Artillery Fire, etc… If there are two or more PDF's pointing to a single card, add a Crossfire VOF to the target card as well. The Crossfire VOF adds additional penalties to the card's VOF rating, which causes a lower combat modifier, which causes more damage! Note that when the Combat Effects segment comes around, the *lowest* VOF modifier is used to calculate damage (by "lower", we mean "more severe" as lower ratings indicate more penalties). So if there is a "S" VOF and an "A" VOF on a card, the "A" VOF will be used to calculate damage, not the "S" (S is +0, whereas A is -1). Additionally, the card will have a Crossfire VOF as well, which is another -1.

When friendly units move into the LOS of the *enemy*, the enemy will engage the friendly units in the same way as described above. The enemy units will place a PDF pointing to the friendly terrain card, and then you will place VOF's on the friendly card to indicate the type of fire your units are facing.

The placing of PDF's and VOF's happen as they become relevant (when units come within LOS). You do not wait until all commands are ordered to decide when to place PDFs and VOFs for either side. If you activate unit 1-3 first, unit 1-3 will generate PDF's, and all enemies that see it will generate PDFs right when they see them. And once PDF's are in place, they generally *do not* change until the map situation changes. Units will keep firing along a PDF until ordered to shift or cease fire, or in the case of the enemy, their Activation Segment tells them to do something else. See Rules, Page 21 (6.1) for rules about Opening Fire.

In the Combat Effects phase, combat effects will happen to *all* units on a card, regardless of whether the VOF placed there was from friendly or enemy forces. Therefore, if there is an "A" VOF from the enemy on an adjacent card, all forces on the card will be drawing for damage against the "A" VOF, including any enemy forces on the card as well. Friendly Fire must be considered at all times! If you order squads onto a card with a friendly VOF, your squads will be fired upon by friendly forces!

One exception to the above rules is that if units are engaging at Point Blank Range, then there will be two *distinct* VOF's on the card, and each side will be affected by the *other side's* VOF (in addition to any VOF's coming from *off the card*, as that affects both sides). Therefore, when in Point Blank combat and in the absence of external fire, friendly units and enemies will face damage from the other side's VOF. If external VOF's are coming into the card, each side will face the lower of the two VOF's they are subject to (either the internal fire VOF or the external, whichever is lower).

**IMPORTANT:** If a unit comes into LOS of a card with an enemy on it, it will automatically open fire into that card *except* when the other card already has friendly forces on it. A unit will not start firing on its own forces. The unit will have to find another target.

### Enemy Activity Phase

During this phase, the enemy will have an *Enemy Higher HQ Event Segment* on turns 2 or later (where it draws for an HQ event similar to the Friendly HQ event, with the result being cross-referenced on Page 5 of the Briefing Booklet), and then an *Enemy Activity Check Segment*, where the enemy will move, retreat, call for fire, etc… Basically, you randomly choose a terrain card, and then go from one card to the next, checking all units on that card randomly for actions based on the Enemy Activity Check table on the Player Aid. Rules for engaging friendly units are the same as above.

*Note that the Mortar, Sniper and Spotter Enemy Activity Check tables were not included with the game, but can be downloaded from the GMT web site.*

### Mutual Combat Phase:

So now you've ordered troops to move. They are on cards with Potential Contact Markers (or are already under fire from enemies). In this Phase, we are going to evaluate the PC markers, and calculate Combat Effects.

### Update Fire Missions

*For now, this item is skipped, pending guide updating. Sorry!*

### Evaluate Potential Contact Markers

Resolving PC markers is of primary importance in Offensive Missions such as Mission 1. Units will appear on the map. Some will be visible (spotted) and cause immediate troop engagement. Others will be hidden (unspotted), and may be firing at your troops! Some may appear on your own cards, or even behind your troops!

If a friendly unit is on the same card as a Potential Contact Marker (PC Marker), the PC Marker must be resolved. First, find all PC Markers subject to resolution. Resolve them in *alphabetical order*. Therefore, "Potential Contact A" markers are resolved first. If any letters are the same, resolve them in random order (use the Action Cards to pick the targets; e.g. if there are 3 A's to resolve, draw a card, look up the R# under 3, and resolve that numbered PC Marker). Any combat engagements that occur will occur in real time as we resolve them as per the rules discussed above for engaging the enemy. You do not wait until all PC Markers are resolved before engaging the enemy. This represents the fact that enemy forces do not spot friendly units at the same time, and different regions will be affected at different times by invasion. Therefore, resolution of PC Markers is in the order A, B, C.

If the PC Marker has a "?", flip it over to reveal its severity rating (A is the most severe) before resolving the first marker (so we can determine what letter it is and in what order it is resolved). Next, consult the "Potential Contact Draw Chart" in the Player Aid to see how many cards to draw looking for the contact. Cross-reference the severity of the marker by the current Mission Activity Level. Draw the number of cards specified, and if any contain the word "Contact", you have made contact. Otherwise, discard the PC Marker back into the box.

If you make contact, draw an Action Card, lookup R# 10, then lookup the resulting enemy contact on the table in the Briefing Booklet for the specified severity (Page 5). This will indicate units that are described in the Enemy Force Packages on Page 3. Next, you will draw placements for the units. In general, multiple enemies must be placed on different cards (unless there is a + sign between them in the force package). Some will be placed on the same card as the PC marker that triggered them, others adjacent, others at max LOS. The enemy units cannot generally be placed on the same card unless allowed by the force package, so keep drawing for legal placements until you can find one (and if you can't, don't place the enemy at all).

Once the enemy is placed, the Force Package tells you if they see the US forces or not. If they do, the "Place PDF/VOF?" column will say "Yes". If not, they won't engage this turn, but will the following turn as per normal rules. But if "Yes", then immediately assign PDF's and VOF's as per standard rules on Page 21 of the Rulebook, as the enemy has spotted you and engaged.

Lastly, looked at the "Units Spotted?" column to see if friendly forces see the enemy (Enemies *always* spot friendly forces, although they may not open fire on the first turn they come into play as per above). If they cannot see the enemy, put a PC Marker with the "?" side face-up on top of the enemy units to represent that they haven't been spotted yet. Keep in mind that unspotted units can fire on friendly forces without fear of being fired back upon because friendly forces can't target unspotted enemies (even when on the same card)! If the enemy is spotted, however, and within LOS of a friendly unit that is not already targeting someone else, the friendly force will automatically open fire on the enemy as per rules on Page 21.

## Combat Effects Segment

Now we come to the *Combat Effects Segment*. During this phase, *all* units that are on a card that has a VOF on it due to enemy fire into the card will draw for combat damage. This phase happens *simultaneously*. Therefore, evaluate *all* damage for *all* units prior to adjusting VOF and PDF markers for troops that have been killed. *Every unit* on a card will draw for damage *separately, in any order*. Because many units will come off the board at the same time and in no particular order, any new engagements that arise will generally have to follow the priorities listed on Page 21 (Closest, Highest VOF, Randomly).

To calculate damage, start with an initial Net Combat Modifier (NCM) equal to the lowest VOF on the card. So if there is an A VOF and an S VOF, the initial NCM is -1. Then add the Visibility Modifier if one applies. Then add all Defending Status Modifiers, such as the terrain's Cover and Concealment Rating (+2 for Woods), Basic Cover (+1, which is good because higher numbers are better for the defender), or Pinned (+1 because the units are face down hiding from fire), or +2 from a trench. And finally, other modifiers such as Crossfire (-1), Concentrated Fire (-1), etc… Look at the Player Aid for a full description of all modifiers.

After determining the NCM (-4 to +6 is the allowed range), draw an Action Card to determine the result. See Page 3 of the Rulebook for an example of the Action Card's Combat Resolution table. The Action Card's result will be either MISS, PIN, or HIT.

MISS: If a unit is Missed, they escape damage (*and remove all Pinned markers on them because they recovered from any prior Pins*).

PINNED: If they are Pinned, add a Pinned marker on the unit (*note that a Pin marker can also be removed after any turn a Pinned unit did not face any enemy fire*).

HIT: Lastly, if the unit is HIT, draw another card to determine the Hit Effect, and *add a Pinned marker to the surviving Steps (whether they are Paralyzed, Litter Teams, Fire Team, etc…)*.

The Hit Effect is listed on the Action Card as well, and is divided into 3 sections based on the level of the unit (Veteran, Line, or Green). There will be 1 or more letters in this section which states what happens to members of the unit that were hit. If there are 3 Steps in a Squad, and 1 Letter in the Hit Effect, then only 1 Step is affected. Flip the 3 Squad to its 2 Step side. If there are 2 letters on the Hit Effects, 2 Steps are affected, 1 step for each letter.

See the Hit Effects section of the Rulebook on Page 26 for a listing of possible results from combat.


## Exposed

I'm listing Exposed under its own section because it is a critical element of Fields Of Fire, and applies in many segments of the game. The basic rule is that any time a unit moves, loads onto a vehicle, or takes any other action requiring it to come into the open, it is Exposed for the rest of the turn, which simulates the unit having to run from one terrain to the next, looking for cover, following a stream, or otherwise doing something that makes them vulnerable to attack. Place an "Exposed" marker on the unit, and this unit will keep the "Exposed" marker on it for the rest of the turn (it comes off at the *end* of the turn). The "Exposed" marker will cause a -2 modifier to the unit's NCM during the Combat Effects phase, which means the unit is particularly vulnerable. Certain weapons,

such as Tripod Machine Guns and other HMG's cannot fire when marked with an Exposed marker, which represents the difficulty moving such weapons and having to set them up again.

## Summary

This Quick Start Guide introduced you to many of the basic concepts of Fields Of Fire. It was a quick overview of the concepts needed to get started playing. Unfortunately (for this guide), FoF is an extremely deep system, and there are dozens of other concepts that you'll want to learn as you become familiar with the system (such as Grenade attacks, Artillery Fire, and details about Phones and Radio Networks). The concepts in this guide, however, should allow you to play a few turns, and get familiar with the system. And after you do that, I recommend you start over, and read the Rulebook from start to finish. It will make a lot more sense now!

Good luck!

## Turn Example

To summarize some of the concepts introduced in this Quick Start Guide, I'm going to describe a very brief sample turn. It is recommended after you read this sample turn that you look at the official "Example of Play" downloadable from GMT's web site, and play along with it and with your actual counters. It is far more thorough than this example.

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My troops are prepared to embark into the woods in Normandy. I have 3 platoons deployed, 3 Staff units, pyrotechnics and attachments assigned, and am ready to begin. I set my Primary and Secondary Objectives to the Northeast, as those areas have paths to them with the best cover.

On Turn 1, we skip the Friendly HQ Event Phase, which only happens on Turn 2 or later.

To start the Command Phase, my CO HQ is activated and draws and receives 4 actions, which it marks on the Command Display. It uses 1 action to activate $3^{rd}$ PLT HQ (which is in communication range because they are both in the Staging Area). It saves the rest of its actions for Turn 2, leaving it 3 actions for next turn, and marks this on the Command Display.

$3^{rd}$ PLT HQ has been activated, so it draws an Action Card, and receives 5 actions, which it then uses to send 2 squads into two different cards to the north. With 3 actions remaining, it decides to save them for Turn 2. Squads 1 and 2 are now out in the woods,

and out of communication range, as neither carries a radio or a phone. Both are marked as Exposed, which is a +2 NCM if they see combat this turn.

With no more activated HQ's or Staff, we now move to the Initiative Phase.

PLT 1 HQ wants to send a unit to the North as well. It was not activated by CO HQ, so it will draw for Initiative. It draws a 0. Oh well. It cannot order any units.

No other HQ wants to perform Initiative Actions.

No Staff wants to perform Initiative Actions.

So we move to the final General Initiative Impulse. I draw a 2. Perfect, that's just enough to order both of the 3rd PLT Squads I ordered earlier to search for cover.

Squad 1 finds a PC Marker. The marker isn't resolved yet, but it could reveal enemies, or it could be nothing. The Squad is Exposed, which could hurt it. It needs cover. Therefore, it uses its 1 initiative action to look for cover, drawing the amount of cards listed on the Terrain Card (see Rulebook, Page 2), which in this case is 4. It thankfully finds cover. I could use the other Initiative Action I drew to order the unit to do something else, but Squad 2 needs to look for cover as well, and therefore I'd rather save the action for them.

Squad 2 is also on a card with a PC Marker. It looks for cover, but fails. It is Exposed, and without cover.

The Command Phase is over.

We now move to the Enemy Activity Phase. However, The Enemy HQ Event Segment is skipped just liked the Friendly HQ Event Segment, because it is not yet Turn 2. The Enemy Activity Check Segment is similarly uneventful because there are no enemies on the map.

We now move to the Mutual Combat Phase.

There are no Fire Missions to update, so we move to the Evaluate Potential Contact Marker segment. In our case, there are 2.

For Mission 1, both PC Markers on Row 1 are "C" markers. Since they are the same letter (PC Markers are resolved alphabetically), we decide which to resolve first randomly. Since there are 2 markers, we draw an Action Card, look up the result from the Random # table for the number "2", and see a 1. Therefore, we resolve PC Marker 1 first.

Using the Potential Enemy Contact Draw Chart, we see we need to draw 4 cards to determine if we find a contact (PC C + No Contact Activity Level = 4 cards). We draw 4 cards, and one says "Contact". We have found an enemy. We draw another Action Card, look up R#10 in the "Potential Contact C" Chart in the Briefing Booklet, Page 5, and get

a "1". This equals "Mines". We look up Force Package value #1 (corresponds to the # column in the Potential Contact Chart for Mission 1), see that the Mines are placed on the same card as the unit that triggered them, spotted, and with PDF/VOF in play immediately. As per Mine rules, the *every squad* that ran into the mine draws 3 cards and looks for a burst icon to see if they are hit. In this case, our 1 squad is hit. We flip the Mine marker over (see Rulebook, Page 33) to remember to calculate damage in the Combat Effects segment later on. Remove the PC Marker.

We resolve the other PC Marker in the same way. In this case, we find R#9 in the contact chart for PC C Markers, which results in a "LMG Nest", which is #7 on the Force Package Table. According to the Force Package, we place an LMG Nest under Foxholes on the *same card* as the unit that triggered it. The Force Package tells us to place a PDF/VOF, which means the LMG Nest has opened fire on our scout, but that it is *unspotted*, which means our units can't see it. Place a PC "?" Marker on the LMG Nest to indicate that they can't be seen. Since the LMG ammo must be tracked, we look at the *Ammo* section of Page 5 to see how much ammo the LMG nest gets, and note on our log sheet that the LMG nest has 6 points worth of ammo. At this point, our Squad is in big trouble!

*Two notes:* First, if a cover indicator is not specified in the Force Package chart, we use the Default Cover provided in the Mission Instructions, Page 5, under *Mission Details* (which in this case would have been Trenches if Foxholes were not called for). Secondly, we did not draw for Unit Placement because both PC Markers resulted in Force Packages that needed to be placed on the same card as the unit triggering them.

When the LMG Nest is placed on the card, it places a PDF marker pointing to the scout on the bottom of the card. They are at Point Blank range. It also places an "A" VOF marker on the scout to indicate it is currently undergoing LMG fire. Our unit doesn't get to engage at all because it can't see the LMG Nest!

We now move to the Combat Effects Segment. During this phase, we resolve Combat Effects for all units under VOF markers.

Squad #1 was hit by a Mine, and must suffer Combat Effects. They draw 1 card to determine damage, and get a "P" under the Line column of the Hit Effects section. One Step is Paralyzed, the other 2 are OK. ALL are Pinned because they were HIT.

Squad #2 is facing "A" VOF fire. It starts with an NCM of -1 for the VOF. It gets a -2 because it is exposed. It gets +2 for the Woods terrain. Too bad it didn't find cover! It has a total NCM of -1. It draws an Action card to see results, and gets a MISS! It managed to avoid being hit. Very lucky indeed.

The turn is now over, and so we remove all Exposed Markers on the board. Turn 2 begins.

During Turn 2, we will try to find cover for Squad 2. We will also try to spot the LMG nest so we can attack it. It's a good thing we saved the extra commands we had! We're going to need them. And we will definitely avoid sending more troops over the Minefield!